

Legislative Issue Brief – Jail Reimbursements



Catawba County Board of Commissioner's Legislative Goal

Support an increase in the \$40 reimbursement rate for state inmates in county jails and reinstatement of the \$18 misdemeanor reimbursement

Background

During the 2009 Long Session the General Assembly abolished the \$18 per day reimbursement from the Department of Correction for counties holding misdemeanants serving 30-90 days. This amount was established in 1997 (prior to 1997, N.C. counties received \$14.50 per day). Based on these figures, the County will lose \$187,478 in revenue this fiscal year, due to the seizure of these funds by the State. Extending the time a misdemeanor could be housed by counties from 90 to 180 days was also discussed during the FY 2009-2010 budget process. However, this idea was never introduced as a bill.

Currently, counties continue to receive the \$40 reimbursement from the State for inmates housed in county jails while waiting to be transported into the State Prison System. In FY 2008-2009 Catawba County was reimbursed \$55,437 for these State inmates. The true cost to house these inmates was \$75 per day with a total annual cost of \$103,950. The \$40 reimbursement pays for only slightly more than half the true cost of housing an inmate and should be increased to better compensate counties for housing State inmates. Furthermore, Catawba County opposes any legislation that would result in a reduction in State funding of county jails and supports reinstatement of the \$18 per day reimbursement for misdemeanants held in county jails.

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